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## ART. XI. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. *History of the Worsted Manufacture in England, from the Earliest Times: with Introductory Notices of the Manufacture among the Ancient Nations, and during the Middle Ages.* By JOHN JAMES, F.S.A., Author of the History of Bradford, etc. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts. 1857. 8vo. pp. xvi. and 680.

THIS History was prepared at the suggestion and with the assistance of a committee of worsted manufacturers in the three great manufacturing counties of York, Lancaster, and Chester. It has, therefore, much of the authority which belongs to an official report; and it bears throughout the marks of extensive and thorough research. For the proper performance of the duty assigned him, Mr. James appears to have possessed some special qualifications in his familiarity with the history of Bradford, now the centre of the manufacture in England; and there was certainly no lack of materials within his reach. Though his work is written in an unambitious and careless style, much of it will be read with interest even by the general reader. To the student of English history, the political economist, and the manufacturer, it offers a large amount of valuable information. Mr. James commences his work with a brief sketch of the manufacture among the ancients, and during the Middle Age, gathering in the first two chapters the few and scattered details which still remain, rather as matters of curious information than of real historical value. He then traces, in successive periods, and with increasing fulness of description, the gradual progress of the manufacture in England from the earliest times to the year 1857. These chapters contain much that is both curious and valuable in regard to the production of wool, the fabrics generally worn at different periods, the cost of manufacturing, and other kindred topics, and are abundantly fortified by statistical tables drawn from trustworthy sources. In addition to these chapters, which fill the larger part of his work, he has devoted special chapters to the Inventions applicable to the Worsted Manufacture, to Alpaca and Mohair Manufactures, the Condition of the Operatives, Worsted Processes, and the Seats of the Manufacture. Under the last division are included notices of Bradford, Halifax, Keighley, Norwich, and other places where the manufacture of stuff goods is prosecuted. The Appendix contains some valuable documents and additional tables; and among the engraved illustrations is a view of the celebrated mohair mill at Saltaire, which was opened in 1853.

It would be a valuable contribution to commercial literature, if some competent person would perform a similar service for each of the principal textile fabrics and mechanic arts.

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2. — *A Hundred Years Ago: an Historical Sketch. 1755 to 1756.* By JAMES HUTTON. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts. 1857. Post 8vo. pp. 405.

THE design of this historical monograph is to bring together, from various contemporary publications, such characteristic facts and descriptions as shall present an accurate picture of the social life of England in the middle of the last century. In the execution of this design Mr. Hutton has been less successful than we had hoped. His arrangement is good; but his facts, though often curious and striking, are generally drawn from works which are easily accessible, and many of which may be found in any good private library. For scholars and critics, therefore, his volume offers little that is new; but the general reader will find in it many interesting details, and will easily derive from it a very correct idea of the condition of England at the close of the reign of George II. It is divided into six sections. Of these the first three, which fill rather more than half of the volume, are the least interesting and valuable. The first section extends through a hundred and forty pages, and merely presents a sketch of the principal events in the political history of England for the two years to which Mr. Hutton confines his survey. Following this, we have two chapters describing Miscellaneous Events in Great Britain, and in the Continental countries, including an account of the great earthquake at Lisbon. The third section is the least satisfactory part of the book, although it professes to treat of the "Men of the Day, and what they were doing a Hundred Years ago." In the space of fifty pages it embraces notices of Gibbon, Goldsmith, Smollett, Johnson, Voltaire, and other literary men of the period, a curious list of books and pamphlets published at the time, and some familiar anecdotes. The next section describes the Dark Side of Society, including under this designation the press-gang, footpads, public informers, and other persons of disreputable life. From them we pass to the Frivolous Classes and their Frivolities, and are entertained with a humorous but rather coarse description of the women of fashion and the men of the town. The next section is devoted to an account of the popular Amusements and Pastimes, — the various exhibitions, theatrical performances, places of entertainment, fashionable dances, and public disquisitions, which relieved the tedium of daily life. The last section